

The BULLETIN

Of The
Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association

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Bryan Barker, Editor

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Conducting A School Paper Without A Journalism Class

By Brother Francis Emery, F. S. C.

Some problems associated with the production of a newspaper on an extra-curricular basis in a private school are here discussed by the publications' adviser of the Central District Catholic high school in Pittsburgh, Pa. This school has an enrollment of 1,862 and its paper, "The Viking," comes out ten times yearly.

Not the least among the every day problems of the high school paper adviser is the maintenance of a worthwhile paper without the auxiliary of a journalism class. The problem of reconciling the ideals of journalism with the limitations attendant on extra-curricular work must be approached frankly and practically by the school paper adviser who directs his work toward achieving a product that rises above the mediocre.

With a few qualifications, our school may be classed typical of the private school that attempts a school paper on an extra-curricular basis. And, because of the increasing demands on school personnel, the immediate solving of the shortcoming through an accredited journalism class may be regarded as a luxury beyond the manpower and roster budgets of many schools. The difficulties redounding from the situation include the problem of having a staff that is desirable in personality as well as in ability, of training in fundamentals of journalism on the students' own time, and of motivating students so that shoddy work does not prevail.

In order to overcome these challenges, then, it seems necessary to utilize pragmatic and psychological appeals that guarantee the vitality of the staff. Though peripheral to actual production of the school paper, such things as the frequent use of by-lines, the discreet multi-

plication of positions on the staff, procuring stationery with letterheads that recognize individual staff positions, the attendance of press conferences on as cosmopolitan level as possible, seasonal staff parties and dances, and an end-of-the year parents-staff dinner offer the student the psychological motivation for membership and achieve the practical end of attracting worthwhile candidates for staff membership.

In our own school, these come-ons have an additional vindication. Because ours is an all-boys' school, means must be taken that the staff will not be peopled merely by those who are unsuccessful candidates for sports. An appeal that eventually develops into a tradition must be maintained if the paper is to attract top students from the focus of personality as well as of grades. Over and above the specific fringe attractions, the esprit de corps of the staff itself seems a necessary entity in the continuing of a school paper without a journalism class. The intention is not to advocate a clique. Rather, it is to have a tradition of excellence, of practical experience and healthy activity, associated with the particular group so that belonging to the staff becomes an ambition of the most capable students.

Incidentally, the association of school paper work with social and home activities strengthens the

sense of responsibility of the staff. Teenagers instinctively realize that privileges entail responsibility, and we have found that seasonal dances for staff members complemented by the end-of-the-year parents-staff banquet add a prestige and sense of distinction to the staff that is repaid beyond measure.

These incentives, however, do not preclude the practical difficulties associated with the conducting of a school paper without a journalism class. These core problems center around the quality of the writing and the amount of work that becomes the burden of a few. The urge to editorialize seems to be permanently with us, and repetition of anathemas against slanted views in straight news articles seems discouragingly ineffective when administered in after-school hours. Again, in a large school such as our own, the moderator has direct contact with very few of his staff. Since instructions are given during the hours of after-school liberation and grades on a credit course scale are not within the radius of extra-curricular work, means must be found to circumvent the temptation of mediocrity.

We have found that the problem of the quality of writing is at least partially obviated by returning articles two and even three or four times to the original authors for re-writing. This, of course, entails the assigning of articles at calculated intervals so that deadlines can still be met. It also places the burden of extra-proofreading on the adviser or the editors. Yet the improvement of the reporter is almost inevitable. Associated with this procedure is the assigning of articles to be proof-read or even re-written entirely by all staff members. The vote of confidence, which the assignment to rewrite another's article suggest, has a

psychological appeal that we have found most effective. In like manner, the awarding of school letters on the basis of inches of copy which have been printed without troublesome correction provides incentive for better writing.

As an over-all directive for the writing of articles without the direct work of a journalism class, a mimeographed set of papers briefly outlining requirements for particular types of articles has proved helpful to those students who need constant reminders of the essentials of the news article. Self-criticism of printed articles, notations from the editor of the style of writing, and recognition of staff member by their English teachers stimulate additional incentive to good work. The explanation of headline requirements and the including of a number of tentative headlines with articles submitted also aid in efficient production.

The main burden of the school paper on the out-of-class basis, however, seems almost inevitably to rest on a few editors. Having shared ideas with other advisers, I feel it is not rash to suggest that frequently the greatest portion of the work on the average school paper ultimately is the problem of a handful of editors. It seems not impractical, then, to suggest that the editor of a paper produced independently of a journalism class should have credentials commensurate with his task.

Two qualities, ability and generosity, seem to me to be of paramount importance in such an editor. Ability is a prime requisite because the limitations of a paper without a journalism class cripple the adviser in the help he is able to offer. The editor, then, must be able to seize and analyze situations, to handle his staff politically, to acquaint himself with journalism

know-how with superior alacrity, and to have the dynamic effectiveness that will bear fruit in the paper produced. At the chance of offering a hazardous and opinionated suggestion, I would be specific enough to desire an I. Q. of 120 in any editor in chief in a large school and consider an I. Q. of 115 as almost a minimum for editorship. This, of course, revolves upon the experience that ability is definitely a necessity.

Without generosity, however, ability is of no practical use. Many an hour after school the editor must unselfishly devote himself to perfecting details that the average

reader has no cognizance of. In this regard, it seems at least desirable that an editor should participate in no major activity other than the school paper if he is to do a satisfactory job.

Finally, the personality of the editor means much in the smooth running of the paper and the saving of the adviser of innumerable headaches in matters peripheral to the production to the paper. The well-liked editor will have his work done properly and on time and will be able to conscript necessary help and cooperation with a minimum of difficulty.

The Professional Poetry Market And The Young Poet

By Catherine Haydon Jacobs

All advisers of school newspapers, magazines, and yearbooks have students who are interested in writing poetry. Why not encourage them to get their efforts into print? What follows — written by an experienced poet — is some practical advice by a member of the faculty at Julia Richman high school in New York City.

DEDICATION TO YOUTH

Call to the upland road

That he is coming;

Hear his sure whistle,

Listen to his humming.

Shout to the mountains

With no more delay;

To cliff, to precipice,

"He's on his way."

Bid the gray ocean

Supplement its brew,

Challenges are needed;

He is overdue.

Caution the stars

Let each hold its place.

Warn the loud planets,

"A dreamer is apace."

The professional poetry market is a challenge to all poets, young or old. We have all heard that "poets

are born, not made"; fewer of us, its companion epigram — "Poets are born, not paid." Certainly the writing of poetry is a profession rarely followed for livelihood; but when one's verses can command a fee, even a very small one, there is that sense of special accomplishment which comes after any one steps out of the amateur class.

Every poet is delighted to see his verses in print, fee or no fee. The spirit of true art clamors expression, recognition, lastly a fee. There are many top ranking magazines and newspapers which publish unpaid-for poetry, among them some of our outstanding high school periodicals.

Here, however, I should like to encourage the young poet to enter

the competitive field for gain; in short, to attempt to sell his poetry because if what he has to say is worth while and he hopes to make a living by or a working hobby of writing, the sooner he is admitted to a professional status the better for his encouragement, self-respect, and pocket book.

When, then, should the young poet first try the professional poetry market? May I venture: As soon as his words are found good by one or more whose standards he admires and whose criticism he respects. He often needs the judgment of such a critic, teacher, or friend before he has the self confidence to say "Well, here I am, try me!"

The young poet will frequently write dozens of poems, fearful, even, of submitting them to his school magazine, least of all thinking them salesworthy. He is sensitive to the point that the thought of a rejection slip is so disturbing that he would rather hide his talent under a desk blotter than read "not yet" or whatever the words of rejection may be.

Consider where some of our greatest young poets would have been had they hidden their talents! Where Keats, where Shelley, or the young Millay? Remember that trying is at times as important as winning. Welcome the rejection slip! It helps create the habit of meeting a challenge head on and fearlessly. It simply means that another artist is in business and that's good news in any economy.

Above all, remember that instinct, imagination, emotion are ageless. Often the most profound and sincere emotions come from young minds. Share these thoughts and emotions. The world is waiting!

How now to go about this thing? Most of you have a pretty good

idea. Look over your magazines or newspaper column. Choose from what you have written, verses which may be suitable in spirit or thought. Keep in mind that deadlines for monthly magazines are set some time ahead so that seasonal schedules run about like this: December for spring, March for summer, June for autumn, September for winter.

Keep a list of magazines or newspapers to which you send. Note the name of poem and the date sent. In the upper right hand corner of a regulation sized script sheet, type your name and address, center your poem, double-spaced and clearly punctuated. Be sure your ribbon is in good order so that the typing is bold and legible. Send not more than three poems with an enclosed self-addressed envelope. Attach no note, explaining either the circumstances of your writing, your ambitions, your youth, or your heritage. Be judged by your merit, alone. Be certain that your poems are clean, neat, and do not look too often handled or well-traveled.

Never send a poem to more than one place at a time. Double acceptance which has been known to happen, puts you in an embarrassing spot. Keep copies of all your poems but never send carbons.

If your poem is accepted, the publication owns the copyright. Never allow a poem to be broadcast, set to music, recorded, or republished without obtaining a release and without your own written permission as well.

If an editor should ask for a change in title or wording, ask for condensation or lengthening, do not hop to the conclusion that here is a murderer who is doing violence to your darling on sight. An editor is paid to do his job. He is supposed to be a person of good taste and judgment, a contact man be-

tween writer and reader. Try to see his viewpoint. Don't argue or disagree with him until you've checked and rechecked your thinking. You may have been a high school editor once. You may be a professional editor in the not too distant future. If, on the other hand, you *know* you are right, say so or withdraw your contribution! Play fair!

Do not be impatient. Some editors return scripts in a week or less, most often in two weeks. Some keep poems a month or more, and often this length of time means that they are being considered, although holding scripts does not always mean that. If your contribution is not returned after eight weeks, you might send a stamped addressed envelope with a brief note stating that perhaps you overlooked the enclosure before. If you did or didn't you are likely to hear shortly.

If a rejection slip arrives it may "thank you for sending us the enclosed manuscript. We have read it carefully and regret that it does not meet our editorial needs at this time." Below this there may be a penciled "Sorry" or "Try us again!" Some editors mention particular poems they liked but which did not win on the final vote; some send gay verses of their own like

*"A poet's lot is not
A lovesome thing, God not!
Thoughts loved
Fly home to roost
And editors do not requite them.
How frustrating is his verse,
But wouldn't it be worse,
If one couldn't write them?"*

It may be a telegram or a telephone message rejecting specific poems but asking for others. Some magazines have three printed forms: one to tell you that these pieces do not measure to standard; another that they regret because of an overwhelming supply etc., etc.;

and a third stating that yours has been one considered but in the final analysis found wanting. You'll begin to look forward to collecting the various types of rejection slips. Believe me, we all do; we all have to.

Does one ever send the same poem back to a place which has rejected it, without changes? Yes, but not for six months or a year and not until you have re-examined your work and checked your evaluation of it. Originally it may have arrived too late for a special issue or it may have not been appropriate at the time. Editors may even change.

One of my own poems which I had from the first considered good, went back to the same magazine over a period of ten years at intervals of six months or so. Finally the word came, "Hold for a few weeks, Try us again with this" — I did just that. It was accepted without alteration. It took ten years. I don't know what changing of the guards behind the editor's desks had taken place in that period. I know there was no change in my copy. At another time I changed a title, another time a last line, once, an, opening phrase. In each case — change — presto — acceptance!

I am often asked, "Should I write poems for certain magazines?" No, write yourself! You will find that in most cases your output will vary sufficiently so that one of your poems may well be submitted to the Atlantic, another to the Saturday Evening Post. Even the most serious poet may one day break forth into light verse. Suddenly another market! A poet of light verse like Phyllis McGinley may publish "The Love Letters."

On occasion a magazine may call upon you to write for a particular event or person. There's nothing

*How would I lose the warmth of
the sun
Or the dawn when it's spring
again?*

*Hold you? I cannot hold you
You are snow on a starlit night
You are a sea-gull calling, calling
How could I keep the snow
from falling*

The bird from flight?

She has just written this to her
son:

My Son Sleeps

My son sleeps

In the chambers of my heart.

If he turns in the night,

*My slumbering hands prepare to
comfort him;*

*If he sighs, my dreams are scat-
tered*

*And my love is alerted,
Gruff, uneasy, wary as an army
His tranquil breath is my nour-
ishment*

And his dreams

My spirit's harbor and repose.

Young poet, the world needs you
more than ever now. Dream, and
let the world share your dreams!

(Note: Jehanne de Mare's poem *Heritage* (1946), Majorie Lederer Lee's *For Robert Conversing* (1948), and Rhina P. Espaillat's *Answer - Love You* (1947) are all reprinted here by special permission of the Ladies Home Journal and are copyrighted for the dates given above by the Curtis Publishing Company.)

North Carolina Mentor Discusses Some Printing Problems

By Eugene L. Roberts

The adviser to "Hi-News" of Goldsboro High School, Goldsboro, North Carolina, discusses, at the editor's suggestion, some printing problems from an adviser's point of view.

The school newspaper that has a local, well-trained printer, with adequately equipped shop, with a keen interest in doing a fine job for the paper, and who will print the paper at a price the publication can afford to pay is fortunate indeed and should have no printing problems.

Some papers have this ideal setup, while far more of the publications do not. It is to the latter group I speak.

The outline of an ideal situation suggests several problems either one — or all — of which may face your paper.

First of all there is the problem of securing a local printer. During 25 of the 28 years our paper has been published the printing was done out of town, most of the time

more than 50 miles away. That problem of distance can be overcome, but it means that the staff must be much more exact and prompt in its part of the publication work. Even though we are in a city of more than 25,000 population, there was no printer with the type of press necessary to do our work. For the past three years we have had a local printer and our problems are fewer.

The matter of securing a well-trained printer is important too. Some are not. Some just do not have the know-how for offering much assistance in publishing a creditable paper. They may be good at the run-of-the-mine job work their communities require and then lack the ability to do a good job with a paper.

Certainly an adequately equipped shop is important. That is one of our problems and may be yours. Our printer has a pretty good selection of job type-faces, but we could wish for a better selection for headlines. In fact, to overcome this problem to some extent we purchased six fonts of headline type and turned them over to the printer so as to get nearer what we wanted for headlines. You might do this if your paper can afford it.

Another important qualification, the lack of which can pose one of the most serious problems, is the interest of the printer in doing a fine job. That's one of the most important things in the production of a quality paper. There are printers who will rush the printing of the paper without doing the job as it should be done.

But the final qualification stated in the opening paragraph seems to be the crux of the whole list of problems which the school paper faces. That is, the ability to get a first-class printing job at a price the paper can afford.

I have a feeling that with ample money the printing problems papers face would disappear. I'm not saying that the presence of plenty of money would eliminate all problems, for all of us have to produce papers with high school students many of whom have never had newspaper experience prior to working on the school paper — and, too, most of us advisers are short of perfection.

Money could eliminate our **PRINTING PROBLEMS**, for with adequate funds we could provide a school shop that could do our printing as we wish it done, or we could hire the services of printers who would do the work as it should be done.

I've found that both students and advisers without any printing ex-

perience have a tendency to blame the printer for sloppy work for which the staff is responsible — poor headline writing, an unattractive make-up, and poor proof-reading, to mention only a few of the most common faults. The better we do our job the better the printer can do his, thus solving many of our problems. A "verbal pat on the back" doesn't hurt either in creating and holding the helpful interest of the printer.

Since the lack of money seems to be the big problem may I suggest there are three angles from which to approach this problem:

1. Explore the possibility of negotiating with another printer who will more nearly give you the things you wish.

2. Seek more money from the circulation of your paper. We met this problem by getting our Student Association — our sponsoring organization, by the way — to include our circulation price in the SA fee collected at the beginning of the year, thus assuring 100 percent collections for the paper.

3. Push your advertising possibilities. For 25 years our paper never changed its advertising rates even though the circulation has more than doubled in recent years. Two years ago we adopted a new price schedule for our advertising, upping the rates by as much as 50 percent, and we haven't lost a customer. We adopted a sliding scale which encourages the running of bigger ads to get lower rates. Not only that, but we offer prizes to advertising salesmen by way of part-payment of CSPA convention expenses. We find this stimulates work among the advertising salesmen.

By the use of a telephone directory, or by taking street by street, we list our prospective advertisers. We divide our salesmen into teams

of two each and assign them prospects to call upon after giving the team members suggestions as to how to sell and how not to sell. To stimulate effort on the part of the teams we give free transportation to the leading team in inches sold prior to our convention trip; for the second highest team the cost of the hotel room is the prize.

This method of stimulating the sale of space in our paper is the

only promotion of the kind we sponsor with the exception of our final paper of the year when we carry the pictures of all seniors and sell signature sponsor-ads for the seniors at \$1.00 per signature. This often covers the cost of the final issue of the paper as we have a working arrangement with a local photographer and with the local daily paper by which we get our pictures.

How One School Paper Treated A Controversial Subject

"Tea and Sympathy," a play with a setting in a private New England boys' preparatory school, had a long run at a Broadway theatre in New York City. It was written by Robert Anderson, a 1935 graduate of Phillips Exeter Academy in Exeter, New Hampshire, a boys' private preparatory school with an academic standing second to none in the United States. The part of the persecuted schoolboy accused of homosexuality was played by John Kerr, class of 1948 at Exeter. In view of the nature of, and the implications in, this type of play, could a school paper like "The Exonian" of Phillips Exeter Academy — a very good paper, by the way — discuss in its columns this play, its author, and the players? It did — and did it very well, the editor of The Bulletin feels. What follows takes the form of interviews with Robert Anderson, when he visited Exeter to address a school club, and John Kerr, when he was seen backstage at the theatre in New York. Secured and written by a student reporter, Cleve Twitchell, the interviews appeared in "The Exonian" of May 11, 1954, and are here reprinted verbatim.

Robert Anderson

"Tea and Sympathy," the current hit Broadway play by Robert Anderson, '35, who spoke here last Friday, deals with the problems of a prep school boy.

In bare outline it is the story of a victim of malicious gossip, of a boy who is accused of homosexuality. The boy's father and his adviser demand that he get in with "the right crowd." But it is only the adviser's wife who really understands him. She tries to give him "a little more than tea and sympathy!"

Theatre Arts magazine summar-

ized "Tea and Sympathy" as "an intensely dramatic and illuminating study of three people and their attitude towards love — a boy who is idealistic because he is young and sensitive, a woman who is sentimental because she thinks with her heart, not with her head, and a man who is brutal because he is insecure."

In an interview after his talk on Friday evening, Anderson answered questions about "Tea and Sympathy" as follows:

Q. How much of "Tea and Sympathy" is based on fact and how much is fiction?

- A. It's autobiographical in spirit if not in fact. None of it happened at Exeter. I did have one miserable year, my first: I think everybody considers himself an "off-horse" at one time during his life at school.
- Q. What about the characters? Are they direct models of people you know?
- A. Every character is a specific model. Some are combinations of several people, but none of them are from Exeter.
- Q. Where did you get the idea for the plot of "Tea and Sympathy?"
- A. It's almost impossible to tell. I started with the "off-horse" and the woman. It built up layer by layer from there.
- Q. Are there any details in "Tea and Sympathy" which come from your life at Exeter?
- A. Yes. The boy in the play is called Grace by the other boys. I was called Grace for a while, until the name was changed to Nellie. That name is in my *Pean* biography.
- Q. What about a film of "Tea and Sympathy?"
- A. It will be filmed independently in about a year. None of the major Hollywood studios will do it, because the subject matter would not get past the Breen Office. I'll write the screen play and I hope that we can have the original Broadway cast.

* * *

John Kerr

In Robert Anderson's play, "Tea and Sympathy," the part of the persecuted schoolboy is currently played on Broadway by another Exeter graduate, John Kerr, class of 1948.

Actor Kerr spent three regular sessions at Exeter plus one year of

summer school, living in Amen, Dunbar, and Wentworth Halls. But he appeared in only one Dramatic Association play.

It was at Harvard that he first attracted attention, playing the lead in "Billy Budd" and acting in such plays as "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and "A Sleep of Prisoners." He made his debut on Broadway a couple of years ago in "Bernardine," playing an Air Force cadet.

The following interview with John Kerr was conducted backstage at the Ethel Barrymore Theatre on March 20, 1954.

- Q. How do you like acting?
- A. When you are, it's a good living. When you aren't, it's precarious.
- Q. How, when, and why did you first get the ambition to be an actor?
- A. I still have no ambition to be an actor. I suppose I will go on being an actor until either I enter the Army or I cannot get another job in the theatre.
- Q. What do you think of Deborah Kerr as an actress? as a woman in real life?
- A. I think that as an actress Miss Kerr is very intelligent, very warm, and very subtle. In real life she is honest, generous, loyal, and very affectionate; one of the finest people I have known in or out of the theatre.
- Q. Does your role in "Tea and Sympathy" depress you at all?
- A. No, I like it very much.
- Q. Do you remember seeing any incidents at school which correspond to the one dramatized in "Tea and Sympathy?"
- A. I never saw the exact same situation, but there was a Negro boy there who took quite a beating, until Dean Kerr stopped it.

- Q. How do you value your Exeter education as you look back on it?
- A. It was excellent preparation. I didn't have to take any lan-

guages in college at all. It was good in quality but not in quantity. I think they could have covered more ground in the last year.

Adviser Tells How Newspaper Serves School And Community

By Robert W. Broome

At the March 1955 convention of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association a member of the staff of "Vidette," a biweekly newspaper of McCaskey High School, Lancaster, Penna., gave the editor of The Bulletin a copy of his paper saying, "This is one of the best." The editor agrees with that opinion. Later he asked that paper's adviser to write something of his own choosing for this publication.

What is the function of the school newspaper of today? Probably no other organization can contribute more in service to the school community than can an effective newspaper.

We have found many practical ways for the Vidette newspaper to serve McCaskey High School in Lancaster. Although this article is based almost entirely upon the policy and activities of the newspaper in one senior high school, I trust that some of our methods and practices may prove of value in other schools. Paraphrasing Henry David Thoreau, I would not talk so much about the Vidette if there were any other school newspaper I knew as well.

So that the work of our staff may be purposeful and its responsibilities clearly defined, a policy for the Vidette was devised jointly by the administration and the adviser. Embodied in the following policy are also some of the objectives toward which we are constantly striving:

"The aims of the Vidette newspaper shall be —

1. To collect, distribute, and

interpret news.

2. To entertain.

3. To serve as a forum for public opinion.

4. To influence school opinion in the promotion of good school spirit.

5. To exercise the rights of freedom of the press with restraints fitting in a school community — characterized as courageous and truthful on the one hand and constructive and courteous on the other."

"The first purpose of our school paper, as stated above, shall be the collection and distribution of news. The interpretation and evaluation of news shall be fair and impartial."

"In serving as a forum for public opinion, the newspaper shall aim to present a balanced picture of controversial issues. Through letters to the editor, points of view not in agreement with the policy of the paper may be presented. Such interchange of ideas and opinions may well serve to mould student opinion on various issues.

"The school newspaper shall also function toward bringing about unity of spirit within the school, it

being remembered that one of the most important duties of any newspaper is to advance good citizenship. The Vidette shall be privileged to publish that which accomplishes the greatest good for the greatest number. All items that would appear to be of a controversial nature shall be submitted before publication to the student editors and the faculty adviser for careful examination as to matters of fact and reasonable freedom from unwarranted expression of opinion."

"Our school newspaper shall aid in every way possible to help our students think clearly, reason honestly, weigh evidence justly, and be constructively and tolerably critical. This is the major task of our Vidette Newspaper staff."

Even beyond the publication of the newspaper, the staff has extended its activities to other areas. Our staff has for some years managed the advertising, edited the copy, and supervised the publication of the football program.

For the seventh consecutive year the Vidette staff has sponsored a weekly radio program broadcast over local station YLAN. A tape recorder has recently been purchased to make possible the broadcasting of school programs in which the participants are unable to appear in person at the studios of the radio station.

By means of this program the Vidette has presented an account of school activities and projects to the community. This program, for which the script is written and the entire production handled by staff members, has included news, sports, music, and interviews with outstanding school personalities.

Obviously, however, the best service that a newspaper staff can render to the school community is to produce the finest publication

which is possible in its particular circumstances.

For the past four years, the first issue of the Vidette has appeared on the first day of school. This issue, which is distributed free to everyone, is intended to acquaint the new students with the school and to supply necessary information concerning the opening of the school to all students.

Continuing throughout the year, the newspaper publicizes and promotes all school activities and events.

The Vidette also publishes articles concerning community organizations affiliated with the school. Some of these include the Hi-Y, Y-Teens, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, DeMolay, Job's Daughters, Junior Achievement, Junior Red Cross, and others.

We consider it part of our function to promote community projects, many of which do not pertain exclusively to high school students. These may include supporting drives for Community Chest, March of Dimes, Tuberculosis Society, Red Cross, and other welfare groups. Publicity for contests of all sorts, concerts, dances, or any project related to and sponsored by community organizations cooperating with the school appears in our newspaper.

As another service to the school community, the Vidette has published numerous articles on scholarships available to graduates and information on job opportunities.

The staff has promoted, from time to time, campaigns such as ones to organize a varsity baseball team, to consider provisions for parking facilities near the school, to improve cafeteria arrangements, to keep the school building and grounds clean, or to encourage realization of the opportunities and advantages of McCaskey High

School.

Every effort is exerted to use widely the space provided in the Vidette — not merely fill the paper with any copy available. In other words, editors are encouraged to USE their allotted pages, not FILL them.

Advertising, too, should be of the type which offers products or services which the students want to buy. We try, as much as possible, to avoid complimentary advertising. Many stores or business enterprises have merchandise that students will buy — those are the stores from which we solicit adver-

tising.

Good content, attractive page layouts, appropriate advertising — all contribute to the quality of a school newspaper. After all, the school newspaper reflects school life. All the tradition, prestige, and ideals of the school — the very soul of the school itself — are revealed in the school publications.

Constantly before the Vidette staff are the questions: How much will this issue contribute to good school spirit? How accurately and how completely does this issue represent the life and ideals of the excellent high school in which it is published?

'Average Reader Likes Entertaining As Well As Informative Articles'

By Mrs. Nora Payne Hill

Some practical suggestions on the finding, writing, and headlining of the featured news story by the former adviser to "The Chatterbox" of George Washington high school, Danville, Va. The editor feels that this article is one of the best of its kind he has come across.

During the thirty years that I have been reading high school newspapers I have been impressed with the fact that, while the majority of them do a good job in covering the news of the school, they often neglect stories that would not only offer a variety to their content but would also contribute a flavor and a sparkle to the news page. I once heard a speaker at a national convention say that the reason many school papers were deadlly dull was due to the fact that they overlooked the competitive element found in the metropolitan press. That may be true to a certain extent, but it is my belief that it is the absence of features that makes some student readers pass up their own school newspapers in

favor of publications with greater human interest appeal.

Those who have made a study of scholastic journalism will no doubt agree that the main function of the school newspaper is to print the news of the school — to capitalize the achievements of the few for the benefit of the many. This news is usually presented in the inverted pyramid style, sometimes called the AP style, because the Associated Press instituted this method of writing news stories. However, the average reader likes entertaining as well as informative articles. He will get them if, included among the straight news, there are stories with feature treatment.

Because the subject of features is such a large one, I shall confine

this article largely to the featured news story — that story that may be run on either a news page or on the editorial page. Textbooks do not always make a distinction between featured news and features with no news values. The latter should never go on a news page just as straight news, along with ads should never be found on the editorial page.

The featured news story — often called the human interest story — deals with a news happening that is made interesting for the manner in which it is written rather than for the news it contains. It is true that not all events lend themselves to this type of writing. An inexperienced reporter on the staff of our paper recently handed in an account of a faculty member's wedding done in feature style. When I said I thought it would be better not to handle the story that way, she replied, "But if you knew Mr. W--- very well, you'd know that was the only way to write up his wedding." However, after we had discussed the matter a few minutes, the reporter was convinced that a revision was needed.

It is also true that not every staff member is a good feature writer. He must have some of the creative ability characteristic of the informal essayist or of the short story writer. An adviser can help a student to develop this talent but he cannot implant it.

While the featured news story appeals to the emotions of the reader, it is not often that a school paper prints the type designed to wring a tear. It should get a smile, a chuckle, or, if it is really good, an honest-to-goodness laugh.

Where are these stories to be found? Their sources are in every school, but it takes a writer with more than just a nose for news to recognize their potentialities for

feature treatment.

In this advanced era students do not "stay put" in their respective school. Groups representing different activities are making trips to other schools and to various places of interest. While a paper will no doubt carry straight news accounts of these trips, it is often the case that some incident or incidents occur that will make delightful featured new accounts.

When our cheerleading squad, accompanied by other enthusiastic fans, went on a chartered bus to a town in the eastern part of Virginia, they saw a football game played in a cold, driving rain. It was this unusual experience that lent itself to a story entitled

*Thirty Frozen Football Fans
Cheer Team in Distant Lands*

A drawing by the staff artist showed a grandstand almost empty except for the "thirty frozen football fans."

While a story of the "man-bite-dog" type is likely to attract more attention than one that makes no particular claim to the unusual, a more or less commonplace happening can be made interesting if it is done by a skillful writer. The headlines given below, followed by brief explanations, may suggest material for stories available in many schools.

1. *GWites Throws Lucky Dice
In Friday the 13th Game*

The writer tells the lucky things that have happened to students on the so-called unlucky day.

2. *First Lady of GW Home-
coming Recalls
Week-end Reign at Foot-
ball Festivities*

The story was run when the Monogram Club refused to give the paper the name of the queen and the names of the attendants.

3. *Wives Give Tough Home
Assignments*

A story on the domestic tasks performed by the married men in the faculty.

4. *Will 'Studys' Lose to Video
In Today's Home Front
War?*

A story on how much time students (names given) are devoting to these conflicting interests.

5. *Happy-go-lucky GWites
Find Gaiety Galore
In Rip Roaring Life of
Country's Big City*

A story of the CSPA Convention. One year the paper omitted this story with the result that it received numerous complaints from disappointed readers.

6. *Rain, Balloons, Officers
Keep Maneuvers Jumping*

An account of the military corps' week-end maneuvers.

7. *Fame and Fortune Pursue
Young Girl with a Brush*

A story of a recent graduate whose hobby — painting neckties — was bringing in a nice sum of money.

8. *GW's Office Sleuths Are
Skilled
In Psychology As Well As
Typing*

Story on the varied daily activities of the principal's secretaries.

9. *Principal Heeds Call of
Wild;
Seeks Out Old Hunting
Spots*

Story on our principal's chief hobby. Hobby stories can become monotonous if too many are used, and if they are poorly done.

10. *Wide Open Spaces Drive
Gang
To Seek Excitement in
Mexico*

Story on the lighter side of a trip made by Student Council delegates to a convention in El Paso when they took time off to see a bull fight in Mexico. Cuts, including one of matador and bull, accompanied the story.

Staff seem to encounter less difficulty in finding suitable features for the editorial page than they do in digging up feature subjects for the other pages. Columns of various kinds — poetry, comments on news, book reviews, fashions, personalities, and many others — appear on the average editorial page. Our paper usually carries a 250 or 300-word feature story in addition to shorter articles and columns. Holidays are popular subjects for such stories. But unless writers can avoid the stereotyped methods of presenting them, they will have only a soporific effect on the reader.

Of the best seasonal features of this type that our paper has printed, there have been two that I especially like. One, used in a Thanksgiving issue, was called "John Alden Returns." It pictured the bafflement of the young Pilgrim in finding such very modern Priscillas. The other feature, which came out last January, was named "The Strange Adventures of 1953's Other Life in Space." The old year had been banished to "Planetoid 714" for leaving so much unfinished business.

Equally imaginative features that other staffs might be interested in trying were: "The Eyes Have It," the cut showing ten pairs of feminine eyes and the story, a narrative, giving hints as to their identities; also a story on why late people are late, with a surrealist drawing entitled "It's Tomorrow Than You Think."

The featured news and feature stories discussed at such length in this article have been the longer ones requiring by-lines. There is a short featured news story, one approximately 90 or 100 words in length, without a by-line, that may be interspersed with straight news and so add sparkle to the page. It

tells about some amusing incident that took place in a classroom, in the halls, in the cafeteria, at a ball game, or anywhere that students or teachers happen to be. It is not easy to write, for it must be well planned. Every word counts toward the desired effect. Such a story may end with a climax.

The following is a fairly good example of this type.

Ouch!

Two Fans Get Surprise Of Their Lives

"Yippee, a touchdown for GW!"

This was the shout heard by the many noisy fans at the Lynchburg-Danville game. Of course everyone was excited but some even more so than others.

Anyway, we spied on a Lynchburg fan who was either excited or disgusted. Holding a hot dog in his left hand and his companion's hand in his right, he patiently watched the game. Then, when GW made

a touchdown, he leaned over to his right-side and violently bit into what was there.

As of now there is no news of the girl's sore hand but the boy's swollen eye is finally healing.

It is important that the headlines for all these stories be done in feature style. If they do give a summary, the summary should not be so apparent that the reader's curiosity is not aroused sufficiently for him to read the story.

Everybody knows that it takes flour, butter, milk, eggs, and sugar to make a good cake, but it's the vanilla, the chocolate, the coconut, or the spices that gives it a distinctive flavor. Straight news is the main ingredient of a good school newspaper. However, an alert staff will not be satisfied with providing features for its editorial page only; it will also flavor its news pages with features — featured news, "that is."

New Advisers Find Their Job Bigger Than They Expected

By Martina F. Oetting

New advisers appear each year on the school press horizon. The sponsor of "The Hiways," school newspaper of Wilkesburg (Pennsylvania) high school, adapts a talk, "Suggestions for New Advisers," he gave at the March 1955 convention of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association.

If you have taken over the sponsorship of a high school publication, you have probably already become sure of one fact — that it is a bigger job than you had believed it would be. With new questions coming up every morning, about all we can do here is to suggest answers to a few of them and to indicate where replies to some of the others may be found.

First, be sure that the new job

will take much time, time you feel you are stealing from other duties, time you think you can't afford. Because new advisers are so often also new teachers, they seem to draw publication work in addition to numerous other duties. But, somehow, you do find time; and, surprisingly enough, you will feel that it has been well spent. Work with the school paper, magazine, or yearbook yields immediate results.

It is hard, time-consuming work, but it is rewarding.

Near the top of the list of suggestions we might place, "Make a plan." So many things come up that you can easily develop a bad case of frustration just by being completely disorganized. Have some sort of plan as to what you will do, who will have certain responsibilities, what schedule you will follow. Even though you may revise or even disregard it later and make a new one, an initial plan helps you to get started.

In line with making a plan comes writing it down. Publication work can become such a welter of detail that an adviser and his plan can be lost in the confusion if the plan has not been put on paper. Besides, details not put into writing can be completely forgotten.

Before going on, may I suggest that you overcome that feeling of inferiority which is haunting you? You may not be sure of every step; you may be taking the place of a long-established, experienced sponsor; you may be starting on a new venture never before tried in your school. That is no matter; you will learn rapidly by experience, and in a very short time you will be the experienced sponsor. Almost every present sponsor of a school paper learned in the practical school of experience. You will, too.

Getting as much knowledge as possible follows naturally, of course. Security in knowledge and "know-how" is one of the best antidotes for that inferior feeling noted above. Use the helps offered by textbooks, by press associations, by other aids. That new-found knowledge plus an appreciation of the value of your work will go a long way toward developing self-confidence.

And as you are planning, learn-

ing, working, admit that there will be mistakes. We all make them; so will you. And the world will not come to an end.

It will make your work easier if you can, very early, make some decisions concerning policies. You will have much better results if you have a regularly-assigned period for your work than if you must find all of the time at odd moments. Even though you know little about the theories and practices of journalism and must keep one chapter ahead of your students, try to have a journalism class. There you can learn together. Besides, a scheduled class period gives your work the dignity it deserves in the eyes of the staff; — and, you will get more done. Try also to clarify the questions of who is the final authority; who selects the staff; how is the selection made? At least for next year, you should have a voice in the selection; with your staff, you should set the standards for promotion. Yours will be the responsibility; therefore yours should be the decisions. If you are stepping into a position recently vacated by a respected predecessor, you will, of course, wish to go slowly in making changes in policy; but you should be firmly established as the one person who is the final authority.

This leads naturally into the question of policies concerning the students. How much censorship shall you exercise? Who decides what shall go into the paper or book? These questions can be worked out with your staff on the one hand and with the school administration on the other. No school press is ever completely free, but students do learn to take responsibility. To a degree, at least, they can learn to evaluate their own writing.

As soon as possible, try to organize the staff for responsibility.

Written job descriptions or lists of duties of office help to clarify in the students' minds and in yours just who should do what. As you will learn very early, the desire to write does not necessarily carry with it the ability to do so; nor does efficient fulfilment of obligations always follow interest in "being on the staff." Some sort of schedule showing when certain portions of work must be done is a necessity. Deadlines should be fixed.

Much of the successful functioning of a staff depends upon the spirit and attitude of the members. The right balance must be struck between the businesslike atmosphere of a class or office and the familiarity of a social group. You are more than a teacher; you are guide, friend, co-worker, and counsellor — an adviser in the broadest sense of the word. Too much stiffness discourages students who are giving much extra time and effort to this activity; too great familiarity leads to disrespect and disorganization. The happy relationship between staff and sponsor lies somewhere between.

If yours is a newspaper, having a system of beats or runs will insure better news coverage and more orderly functioning of your organization. A flexible check-up system that weeds out the loafers while rewarding the industrious and encouraging the ambitious is of value. If you and the staff together can set up an editorial policy which expresses the ideals and standards you have set for yourselves, you will have made the intangible manageable and, at the same time, will have grown in mutual understanding.

Concerning faculty and administration, policies are a little harder to come by. You need, however, to work on getting cooperation with your news sources. This coopera-

tion can be obtained only by establishing their confidence in you and the publication, — establishing it in the only permanent way possible, by demonstrating integrity, by keeping confidence, by maintaining deadlines. Also, who checks the material that goes into the paper? In a few schools, anything that appears in print must go through the principal's office. If that is true in your case, you should know it at the beginning, not after you have sent an issue to press. In other situations, only material which you question is checked there. In most schools, the final authority rests with the adviser, who, presumably, would not have been given this position in the first place if he had not been worthy of the trust.

Try to convince your principal or superintendent that you need some sort of centralized work spot. It may be a little abandoned room under the stairs; it may contain a table, a shelf, and an old typewriter; but it will be your staff's "office." However small and unsatisfactory, it will be better than no room at all.

Your outside-of-school public may give some of you a little concern. Policies on what to include in the paper must be partially influenced by the consideration of how the written material may affect the outside reader. However, once you have done the best you can, don't worry too much about outside criticism. The mother who went to the principal's office and complained about the newspaper adviser because he had permitted a hyphen to be printed in P-TA is, fortunately, an isolated case. You can not please everyone; but you can wear yourself out trying.

And, finally, avail your self of the helps that are around you. Membership in press associations is an excellent aid to the adviser as

well as an incentive to the staff. Join one or more! the helpful magazines and bulletins they issue can be most useful. You have many to choose from — Columbia Scholastic Press Association, National Scholastic Press Association, Quill and Scroll, state and local press organizations. Even if you do not enter their annual contests, some of these associations offer critical services; and some, for a very small sum, will send you their blank score books. These are much more than score sheets; they are concise summaries of the various principles and practices of good school journalism; they are, in themselves, a short course in publication work.

But do enter the contests. Even if you win nothing at first, the criticisms that are returned to you are very well worth studying and very helpful. Besides, who knows; you might rate better than you think! And, if you can, try to attend conventions with your staff. The stimulation of discussing problems with other staffs is a great encouragement to students. You may not be able to "make" the national conferences until you have had time to convince your administration they are worth while, but there are probably local meetings which you can attend. Many state organizations are subdivided into regional groups, and more and more colleges are sponsoring workshops and one-day conferences for high school journalists. Yearbook staffs in many sections of the country have workshop meetings sponsored by engravers or lithographers.

Other sometimes-neglected helps exist in past files of the papers and in exchanges, and also in the daily newspapers. Many ideas can be picked up from exchange papers, and the daily press offers plenty of examples to illustrate journalism lessons.

Of course, textbooks are a necessary part of your equipment. Many good books on high school journalism are now on the market for the benefit of the newspaper staff. The more recent ones even devote space to the yearbook and the magazine. This is indeed an innovation. This is not the place to advertise one textbook as superior to another, but you will not find it hard to compile a list of useful texts.

So the list grows. Suggestions can pile on suggestion until, like Alice, you get all out of breath but don't go anywhere. You can perhaps sum up the whole situation by saying that journalism sponsorship is a big job, certainly not an easy job, but a challenging one in which each can see his own growth. Keep at it; it does become somewhat easier; and it certainly is rewarding!

THE BULLETIN

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The editor is Mr. Bryan Barker, active editorial faculty adviser of a weekly, six-page paper, The Mercersburg News, The Mercersburg Academy, Mercersburg, Penna.

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Accuracy, Eye Appeal Are The 'Musts' Writes Printer

By Adelaide M. Blaetz

Do advisers know anything about printing from the printer's point of view? For an expression on what printers want, wish, and think, the editor turned to a member of the firm of Blaetz Brothers, Inc., Fox Chase, Philadelphia 11, Pa.

If, right now, you asked me, what is the most important thing to good printing, I would answer, unhesitatingly — ACCURACY. Next, I would say EYE APPEAL. CONTENT is your problem, not the printer's. But, in both of these first two aims, the printer is dependent largely upon you.

It is surprising how often — no matter the source — that errors creep into copy that has been scanned and scanned again. Not until in the printed word do they jump out at you like a house afire. Then it is too late, and embarrassment and loss of confidence are the penalties.

Therefore, when copy comes to the printer's desk — whether it be newspaper, magazine, or job printing — the first question which we ask is: "Have you checked this copy very carefully; are you confident that this is the way you wish it to appear in print?"

The cheapest place to catch an error is in the original copy. The cost gets greater as it passes through the various stages of proofs — galley and pages, until it's cost in the finished, distributed piece is impossible to calculate in lost prestige!

Here, we might list the most common errors: misspelt proper names, inconsistencies in style (such as capitalizing, punctuating, abbreviations, etc.), oversights in closing quotation marks and parenthetical statements, inconsistencies in tense, care-

less incompleteness of names and words printed to make clearer, and poor paragraphing.

Remember, too, that the typesetter is a normal, human being. He cannot read poor copy at a practical production speed. It may be poor because of illegible handwriting, poor typing, over-zealous editing, too much inserted copy that is hard to follow, weak carbon, or from ill-assorted scraps of paper. And, since you pay the bill, the cost reflects back to you.

No matter how willing you may be to be responsible for this expense, time is a most important element. Lost times means lost schedules and late deliveries, not alone for you, but for the next job in line.

A good typesetter is also a proud individual (he must be to be good) — proud of setting copy correctly. And, if for no better reason than that you have changed your mind, or just now have had chance to re-read the copy — he will resent this disrespect of his handiwork, and not like to throw away that work which he has completed well.

All of which emphasizes our first aim — *nearly* perfect copy. You will expect *completely* perfect copy.

There are errors, too, which show up on the galleys (the approximately 20-inch sheet of paper showing proof of type) which exasperate you. Often these are the result of machine trouble: wrong font type (another family or face), defective

letters, poor alignment, consistent absence of some letter or letters in the same galley, and mixed-up lines. Accuracy applies both ways, and a good printer should attempt to correct such galleys before presenting them to you.

Your choice . . . EYE APPEAL

Eye appeal is the immediate impression your page makes, not analyzed for content, but purely for its appearance.

If the reader was stopped by a bad, first impression, no matter how good the content of the text, at that point he is likely to quit reading. This defeats your purpose.

Into this appearance goes your selection of page size, quality of paper, number of columns and their width, type sizes and families.

Again, be it newspaper or magazine, you probably have been pleased with someone else's publication, and a consultation with your printer can result in applying some of the features you like, as far as his equipment and facilities will permit.

For your selection:

Page size — there are some standard sizes. These are adapted to column widths and good proportions. Size of the printer's presses is also the consideration.

Quality of stock — Glossy (enamel or machine finish) stock is for better halftone reproduction. Specific kinds of paper are better adapted to either letter-press or offset printing. Economy is also important.

Column widths and number — these depend upon size of page, and are selected for readability, machine limitations, etc. Thirty picas wide (or 5 inches) is maximum line-type setting; 4 picas for minimum (and this is preferred to be 6 picas to permit better word breaks). Average newspaper columns are 11

and 12 picas wide. Magazine columns may vary from 12 to 30 picas, depending upon size of page and printed area.

Type sizes, and measurements: A printer measures height of type by points (72 to an inch). Thus the sizes of type in points. Width is measured in picas and half picas (6 picas to an inch) as indicated on a picas ruler. Body matter, or text, is usually 7 or 8, or even 9 point in newspapers, and 10 or 12 in magazines. Set upon its own base, it is called "set solid." Set with some leading, it is indicated to be on a 2 or 4 point greater (such as 10 on 12, or 10 on 14). This allows greater white space between the lines, and improves appearance, gives greater ease in reading.

Type families and faces: The family is the name given by the designer or foundry. Your choice of families is limited to the selection at your printer's. Certain families become favorites over periods. These are selected by the printer to fill certain needs. Some are best adapted to glossy paper (magazine), or newspaper work, as the case might be. Some types are masculine, some effeminate. Others are bold or shy, dignified or casual, old-fashioned or modern, and so on.

Types come in bold, medium or light weights, and expanded or condensed. Some are in all caps, caps and small caps, or caps and lower case. And all of these may be Roman or Italic. Not all families give such wide ranges; nor are all families to be found in all sizes.

Headlines and Titles, the EYE-CATCHER

Headlines and titles are the "red light" or stop signs of your publication. They focus the reader's eye. Now, by your story's contents, keep the reader's interest. Let each line, each deck, and each paragraph intrigue him to the end.

The easiest, and I think the best, plan for calculating space is to set a sample line from the printed page on your typewriter. Set the marginal stops when the line starts and ends. Thus each line you set approximates a line of type. Check how many lines of type to the inch, and thus each such number of lines on your typewritten sheet is an inch of type on the printed page.

Be familiar with printer's lingo. Cut, mat, stereo, boiler plate, slug, kills, bleeds, and all such terms are commonplace.

Be familiar, too, with engravings. Photographs are made into halftones; pen and ink sketches into line cuts. To order them properly you must know column widths and screens. Consult your printer in order to avoid costly mistakes.

And then to press . . .

All this preliminary information brings us with prepared copy through the typesetting stage, and then to proofs.

The average shop furnishes a galley proof (20-inch strip of paper) for corrections and alterations. Usually another proof in color is also

furnished. This one is for pasting into a layout or "dummy."

Remember, your dummy is your pattern. This includes all directions for the make-up man. Usually after the first issue, such items as use of dashes, boxes, cut-off rules, etc., become style, unless directed otherwise.

Clearly indicate your directions, but do not over-mark. Repetitious and unnecessary directions tend to confuse and slow up production. Be clear, but be brief.

New copy should be written or typed on a separate sheet with some clue as to its insertion on the dummy. Hold late copy to the minimum. Don't lose costly time when going to press. Your delivery schedule suffers. This costs someone money — the printer or you.

If you want this newspaper or magazine publishing experience to be worthwhile to your staff, remember *accuracy* and *conservation of time* are among the chief components of a successful publisher.

Let working with the printer be a worthwhile experience!

Let Interviews 'Breathe Life' Into School Papers Says Adviser

By Adrian R. Dunn

The adviser to "The Bismarck Hi-Herald," Bismarck, North Dakota, sets down in a clear and simple way some of the essential points to be followed in successful interviewing.

Since that mid-July day in 1859, when Horace Greeley of the *New York Tribune* met in Salt Lake City with Brigham Young, the Mormon leader, to conduct the first real interview in the history of journalism, the interview has moved to a front-rank position among reporting techniques.

Campus editors use the interview to breathe life into the pages of

their school papers, for what better means of adding sparkle can be found? Certainly it is a top-notch means of satisfying student demand for the intimate and the lively, while avoiding the bad taste of the gossip column.

Too many cub reporters, however, find the interview an opportunity for some of journalism's most spectacular flops. The timid

may be awed by the prospect of being closeted with subjects of even minor fame or authority. Another youth might plunge blissfully unprepared into the interview, only to be shaken by a rapid succession of awkward pauses.

A successful interview seems to depend upon a plan of attack. The reporter would do well to learn as much about the subject as he can in advance. If it's a student, faculty member, or other local personality, much can be gained by talking to his friends and associates. If an out-of-town celebrity, the library will supply the necessary background. The more complete the research, the smoother should go the interview, for the reporter will feel like he's visiting a friend rather than a stranger.

Before the actual meeting, most young reporters should prepare a list of questions pertinent to the interview. Key words jotted on the reporter's copy paper should suffice to remind him of the questions he prepared. The resulting sense of security is an added bonus.

When possible interviews should be arranged by appointment, at the convenience of the person to be interviewed. The reporter should be willing to make necessary concessions as to time and place. It is always possible, however, that an interview may appear from out-of-the-blue, and the reporter will then have to depend upon his own resourcefulness, as is the case with any spot news coverage.

Friendliness and courtesy are the reporter's best assets once the interview is under way. The reporter must introduce himself and state his purpose. If the opening questions are casual and personal, the interview should continue with both parties at ease. A properly prepared reporter is in a good position to carry out his assignment

with confidence and assurance. His sense of well-being should result in the informality of a friendly visit, a situation best suited to stimulate a lively story.

Genuine interest in the subject and his story can help the reporter win confidence and support. Sincerity is universally appreciated. Alert and tactful questioning will keep the interview going along channels desired by the reporter. Since the printed interview should not interject the role played by the reporter, attention should focus on the subject and his words at all times.

Opinion seems divided on the best methods of taking notes during an interview. Some professional newsmen, dealing with persons in public life, find that many of their subjects have no objection to obvious and copious note-taking. On the contrary, they may feel that they are less likely to be misquoted by a reporter that faithfully jots down the events of the interview.

Others feel that note-taking should be as unobtrusive as possible, so as not to disturb the informality of the interview. Since most subjects of a campus interview are not veterans at facing the press, they may be uncomfortable in the knowledge that what they say is being rapidly set to paper. It is probably best, then, that the reporter focus as little attention as possible on his notes. But care must be used to assure that any direct quote is completely accurate.

Once the interview is concluded, the story must be organized and written. Broadly, interviews may be divided into two classes: those in which the information gleaned from the subject is of prime importance, and those in which the personality of the subject holds the greater reader interest.

Most used by school papers is

the interview that stresses the personality of the subject. Here the goal is to present to the readers a word portrait of the person interviewed — he should come alive on the pages of the school paper. The story should be crammed with quotation, the direct interwoven with the indirect. The alert reporter would observe any mannerisms that could add color to the story. Maybe it's not always "the little things in life that count," but they certainly make for graphic description.

One of the hardest jobs an adviser has is to bring a student reporter to the realization that the seemingly unimportant things that cause chatter in hallways and locker rooms are the very things that bring spark and personality to the news columns. Interviews should

reveal this spice of life. While ordinarily mistakes in grammar made by the subject are tactfully eliminated, it might be that honesty here would serve up the flavor of the story. Such instances would be rare in campus reporting, however, and anything that might embarrass the subject is strictly taboo.

Once the interview is completed, no time should be lost in writing the story. The more delay, the greater the danger of losing that sharpness of detail so vital to the personality portrait.

Beset on all sides by Cinemascope, Technicolor and Stereophonic sound, today's students expect freshness and excitement wherever they turn. Can the newspaper measure up?

'Preparing Your Yearbook For Publication'

Preparing Your Yearbook For Publication, a book of real value to all editors and advisers concerned with the proper preparation of yearbook material, regardless of their sources of printing and photography, has just been issued by Bradbury, Sayles, O'Neill Co., Inc., 219 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y.

Costing one dollar per copy, including mailing, this 23-page brochure seems to cover almost everything required to put together a successful, attractive yearbook.

Here are some of the headings (and subheadings) of the topics dealt with: General Steps (assignments, time schedule, section progress chart); The Dummy; Fitting Copy (the character count system, the square inch system, titles); Preparing Your Photograph (cropping,

bleed pictures, mechanics of proportion, picture identification, picture content and style, snapshot pages); etc.

As the publishers state this brochure is "a text on basic yearbook production and resolution of mechanical problems to allow staff and adviser more time in which to concentrate on actual content of their yearbook."

Dr. Joseph M. Murphy, director of CSPA, contributes the foreword to the brochure and makes the following pertinent observation:

"People desire a 'good looking' book but an attractive wrapping is no indication of the intrinsic value of the contents of the package. If there can be a happy marriage of the two, all concerned with the operation will be pleased with the results. This is the aim of this booklet . . ."

Guide To Good Books

By Hans Christian Adamson

U. S. Air Force, retired. Author in the fields of aviation, astronomy, popular science, biography, history, transportation, nature, etc. The reviews appearing in this March 1956 issue of The Bulletin of the Columbia Scholastic Press Advisers Association, published quarterly at Columbia University in the City of New York, are also distributed to four hundred United States Armed Services libraries in thirty-six Commands throughout the world. Readers please address all inquiries regarding "Guide To Good Books" to: Hans Christian Adamson, Parklambrea Towers 6-B, 360 South Burnside Avenue, Los Angeles 36, California.

Those who have found entertainment and inspiration in novels from the hand of Kenneth Roberts will find his newest sure-fire seller, *Boon Island* (Doubleday — \$3.75) to their complete liking. Again Mr. Roberts has turned to the, to him, familiar scene of the New England coast for the subject of his tale. He found it on wave-washed, storm-driven Boon Island off New Hampshire's shores. There, in 1710, a vessel was driven hard upon the rocks to the deadly peril of every soul aboard. Mr. Roberts' story deals with hours of horror aboard the ship during the storm that lead up to the wreck, and the heroic fight for survival in the surging surf.

Lola Montez, also known as The Woman in Black, was not exactly what the members of any Woman's Club back in the nifty 1840s would regard as a "good woman." She was not even just a "bad woman." In short, the word for Lola was notorious. Helen Holdredge, who gave us such a colorful picture of old San Francisco in *Mammy Pleasant*, is the author of *Woman In Black* (Putnam — \$4.50 — Illus.) a full and somewhat unusual biography about this daughter of the Con-

tinient whose tempers, sheenani-gans, and didoes did so much to make, in the early days of the Victorian era, the word actress almost synonymous with adventuress. In digging up the dirt about La Montez, Miss Holdredge has used a shovel of major proportions. She writes about her target with little sympathy but completely womanly understanding. The peculiar thing about the author's style is that her dead-pan approach to the painting of Lola's portrait somehow seems to give it greater realism than is the case in some highly dramatized profiles of people long dead. The story of Miss Montez is, in a way, a pathetic one in that it shows that woman, in her quest for beauty, often reaches out for her own destruction. The reader will not always like Lola, but she is never drab.

Back in April 1912, a newly constructed super-liner was pushing its way at full speed westward across the Atlantic bent upon capturing that piece of blue ribbon that would make her the Speed Queen of the Big Pond between Southampton and New York. Iceberg warnings had been issued. But the newest speedboat, with watertight compartments, was sink-proof. Ice-

bergs? Pooh! They meant nothing to the sharp-prowed ship. Near midnight on April 14th, the vessel hit a big iceberg that barely scraped its bottom, but enough to tear open enough compartments to sink the vessel. The allegedly unsinkable Speed Queen was the Titanic; and long before dawn on that April 15th more than half of her 2,200 passengers were to die in the sea. It is a long sail from 1912 to 1956, but despite the passage of more than four decades, the drama of the disaster has never been forgotten by sea-farer or by landlubber alike. And now, as a none-too-gentle reminder of the incident, comes *A Night To Remember* by Walter Lord (Holt — \$3.50 — Illus.). This unusual piece of research has been conducted by the author over a period of 28 years. Since boyhood, he was fascinated by the causes and the results of the disaster. In his teens, he began to collect data about the vessel and the people involved — crewmen and officers of the ship, as well as passengers who were rescued or relatives of those who died. *A Night To Remember* is a noteworthy book. A rather amazing phenomenon in this day and age when airliners fall out of the sky and kill scores of people only to be forgotten as soon as the ink on the headlines is dry.

Some years ago, Nat Fein, a photographer of the New York Herald-Tribune, won the Pulitzer Prize for being a handy gent with a press camera. Up to now full appreciation of this interesting fact was fully shared only by the steady readers of New York's H-T. Now this oversight has been remedied by the issuance of *Animals*, a book of pictures by Nat Fein (Gilbert — \$3.50). The results are wonderful lineups of pictures that cover the range from cats to kangaroos. Most of them are of the "cute" variety

showing dogs caring for kittens and cats watching fishbowls. But somehow the pictures have an extra quality of appeal that gives meaning and life to the wee beasties pictured and let them steal right into the spectator's heart. Explanatory captions are well done and full of the brand of "human interest" that pets, penguins, and pachyderms seem peculiarly able to convey.

There may have been better and more readable books about modern Russia — I mean up-to-the-minute reporting — than Marguerite Higgins' latest, but if such books exist, they have not come my way. A book about our communist brethren no one can afford to miss is her *Red Plush And Black Beard* (Doubleday — \$4.00 — Illus.). In its some 250 pages there is not one shred of opinion, not one ounce of conclusion. Every single line is simply top-hole reporting that covers the field from assassin to Zhdanov. Miss Higgins lets her reader draw his or her own conclusions. That is the fundamentally attractive portion of Miss Higgins' style of approach to writing. She is essentially a reporter whose skills lie in knowing how to dig up facts and in knowing how to write facts without shading them with opinion. In addition, *Red Plush And Black Beard* is as up to date as today's newspaper. One can make that observation with perfect certainty, for in Russia things change little in the passing parade of men.

Poison! It fascinated the Borgias and dominated the thinking of early day Medicine Men as well as it dominates the research of Men of Medicine of the current centuries. It also holds a sort of shiver-my-timbers interest among laymen, especially among those who select "edible" mushrooms in the woods. Now a book that takes us on unique and often horrifying explo-

rations into the highways and byways of plant life — in order to point out roots, blooms, seeds, and leaves that would drop you deadlier than the proverbial door nail if you tried to eat them — comes down the path in the form of *The Book Of Poisons* (Rinehart — \$5.00). Strangely enough, the book is not illustrated. But since it probably would not be used by too many wives or husbands as a book of ready domestic reference, perhaps nothing is lost. Gustav Schenk, the author, deals with various plant families from caffeine to opium, from mandrake love portions to chemical warfare.

Only shortly before he passed on to the greener pastures that await the willing workers of this vale of tears, Bernard De Voto computed the last of his many books on history and events. Called *The Easy Chair* (Houghton, Mifflin—\$4.00) it is obviously a distillation of the various columns he wrote as editor of *The Easy Chair* column in *Harper Magazine*, a job he began in November, 1935, just twenty years prior to the time of his death. Few writers had the gift of observation of current events — and the genial tolerance to recognize them in their true lights — given to Mr. De Voto. Month upon month, year upon year, his sage — at times sharp, at times teasing — but always penetrating comments on the stage of life and its passing parade of character actors, were awaited with interest by tens of thousands of readers. He will be missed as will more of the kind of books he wrote on the major chapters of American migration and expansion — such as *The Years of Decision*, *Across The Wide Missouri* and *Mark Twain's America*. While *The Easy Chair* is not a monumental book in itself, it provided none-the-less an adequate closing period to a writing

life that was rich in quality and full in quantity touching, as it did, upon almost every phase of American life from the Kerosene to the Atomic Age.

Speaking of monuments to writers, it is about time that someone thought of producing one to B A Botkin. (Lord, how I hate names made up of initials. The letters B A usually follow a name instead of preceding it.) But that aside, Mr. Botkin has produced enough books covering subjects of America to build a monument of spectacular size. His *Treasuries of Folklore* and *Folkways* cover the wild West, the sedate South and puritan New England. Also railroads, Jews, and Irish in the New World of America. Now along comes a new and hefty addition to this already imposing array. It is entitled — and moreover it is — *Mississippi River Folklore* (Crown—\$5.00). For my money, this 600-page opus fills the job about the Father of Waters from his head springs in the northwoods to his sand-splayed delta below New Orleans and points in between. For lovers of Americana — and who is not? — there is the whole picture of the mighty river with its fascinations and its dangers — its great steamship days and the humble people who sail it in floating shanties. Here we have the heroes of the rivers — like Shreve and Eads who helped tame it; the villains of the water, like Mike Fink and Murrell, who added much to the uncertainties of travel. But in between the Big Timers are the small fascinating stuff about pitch lanterns, rustabouts, High-Hat Pilots and Kingly Captains. In war and in peace, in boom times and in days of panic, Old Mississippi has been running along, we learn, but not always at the same pace or even in the same place.

Newspaper readers and periodi-

cal perusers who browse through the illustrated pages of dailies and magazines in the fond belief that spectacular photographs of swift action by daring young camera men is something new under the journalistic sun have another thought dawning on reading *Mathew Brady — Historian With A Camera* (Crown — \$7.50 — \$Illus.). In this carefully prepared biography, James D. Horan, who authored *Confederate Agent*, presents a magnificent collection of more than 500 well-captioned photographs taken by the Civil War forefather of Combat Photography. In the running text, Mr. Horan has undertaken, and with good results, to outline the detail events of leading battles.

And still they come, those breath-taking escapes by escapees from the brutal hands of the enemy of World War II. Just as one thinks the saturation point has been reached, along comes another one that has so much heroism, so much do-or-die crammed into its covers, that it simply cannot be discarded as just another escape book. Such is *We Die Alone* by David Howarth (Macmillan — \$3.95 — Illus.). Through the eye of Mr. Howarth's pen the reader observes the dangerous adventures faced by Jan Baalsrud, the lone survivor of a British-Norwegian underground group sent into northern Norway during the winter of 1943. Because a cowardly Quisling merchant did not dare keep quiet about the under-cover group having landed in a trawler near his fishing-supply business on a small island, twelve Norwegian patriots and as many British sailors were killed by Hun sharpshooters. Only one man survived and escaped — Baalsrud. By superhuman efforts, despite feet ruined by frost and gangrene, he fought his way through 80 miles of

snow to the Swedish border and freedom. This is the story of that escape at the rate of little more than one mile per day.

Those who may still be confused and confounded by the melting of the Red diplomatic snow last summer at the summit in Geneva, get a first hand chill of the frost that can prevail at lower levels between Western and Communist negotiators in *How Communists Negotiate* (Macmillan — \$3.50 — Illus.) by Admiral C. Turner Joy, USN, retired. Admiral Joy, it will be remembered, led the group of Western negotiators who headed our side during the Korean armistice negotiations at Kaesong and Panmunjom that stretched on and on for many wearisome months and due entirely to the sometime snide, frequently childish but always annoying delaying tactics employed by Red spokesmen. This concise summary tells the entire story of significant frustrations.

In the course of his long and active life, William Randolph Hearst — the founder of the Hearst Newspaper Empire — was called many things including the Father of Modern Journalism. Just how blessed his fatherhood was is open to discussion; but the fact that he had a hand in the creation of circulation-rousing newspaper features and the development of spectacular news slants is not to be denied. Hearst believed in the spectacular. But the most spectacular thing about Mr. Hearst was Mr. Hearst himself. In this, his second book about the great editor, John K. Winkler, one of our better biographers, gives America's readers *A New Appraisal Of William Randolph Hearst*. It is a frank biography that spares no one's feelings — a policy of which Mr. Hearst approved if it did not hit too close to home.

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